



**Developing Champions in Life through  
Excellence in Swimming**

YMCA of the North Shore  
Sharks Swim Team  
Handbook 2022-2023  
(Updated 9/1/2022)

## **I. Welcome Page**

This Parent/Swimmer handbook has been prepared by your coaches and the Y leadership to help your family get off to a great start with the team. It's an opportunity to learn and a reference tool for some key details that will help you navigate the sport of swimming.

By Choosing the YMCA of the North Shore Sharks (YNS) you have joined one of the premier swim teams in the United States. YNS is a swim team designed to offer young athletes a challenging and fun path of self discovery through competitive swimming. A true path of growth to strengthen spirit, mind, and body. In alignment with the YMCA Core Values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility, YNS coaches, swimmers, and their families are all expected to adhere to these ideals as we endeavor to positively impact the lives of our young athletes.

## **II. YNS Vision Statement**

Through its key strengths of innovative coaching techniques and strategies, supportive parental involvement, and organizational support, the YNS Sharks are a team driven towards developing the best combination of human beings and competitive swimmers. Our team maintains a strong integration of Y core values while helping to build strong families and strong communities.

## **III. YNS Training Philosophy**

The YNS Sharks subscribe to a philosophy of teaching and training that strives to create a long term path to high performance standards in and out of the water. We are divided into seven different training groups formed with swimmers based on age and ability. The center of our coaching philosophy resides in building a foundation of strong technique, aerobic conditioning base and a love of racing. Inherent in all that we teach in and out of the pool are the practices of leadership and accountability which go hand in hand with the Y core values. As swimmers

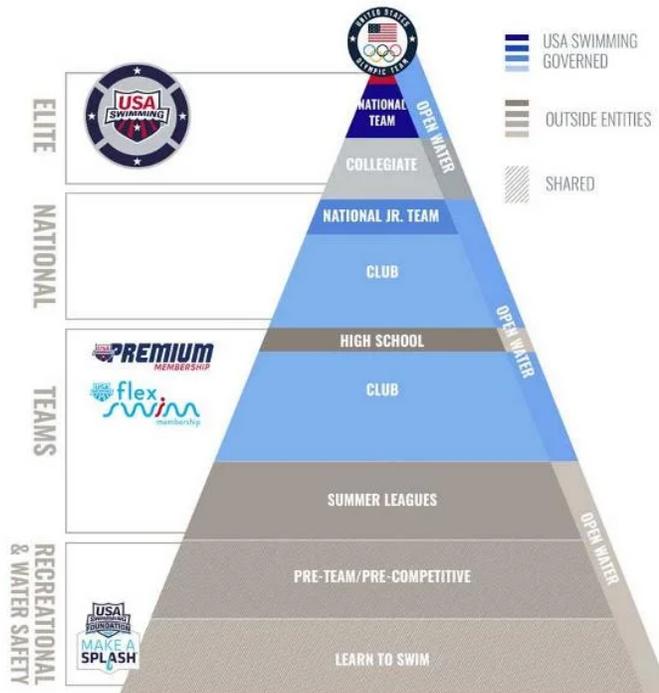
progress through the program they will find that they become more and more responsible for their own swimming. Things like: self discipline, time management, sportsmanship, teamwork and goal setting are important life skills that are tools that they will carry far beyond the swim career.

#### **IV. YMCA Swimming and USA Swimming**

Our YNS Sharks team is unique in that while we are a Y team we are also a USA Swim team. As such, our team adheres to the rules of both national governing bodies. It's not difficult to navigate the differences but with the help of our coaching staff and our parent leadership group you'll quickly become adept at knowing and understanding the differences between non championship meets and the different levels of championship competition under each governing body and the swimmer requirements for each as well. This practice is designed to enhance the learning and competitive opportunities for our athletes. Our schedule for competition is built with both types of meets carefully considered.

YMCA Meets are held with only Y swim teams; however, all of the times achieved at these meets are entered into the same database as those from USA meets. As we approach the championship season it is important to remember that there is a requirement for swimmers to have participated in a requisite number of Y meets in order to be eligible to participate in both regional and national Y meets.

USA Meets fall under the auspices of New England Swimming. This organization is our Local Swim Committee (LSC) which oversees all swim meets in Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island.



## V. Our Training Sites

Our team is comprised of four training sites that host the entire range of training groups from our Pre Team to our Senior Elite swimmers.

These locations are as follows:

1. Greater Beverly YMCA 254 Essex Street Beverly, MA 01915
2. Ipswich Family YMCA 110 County Road Ipswich , MA 01938
3. Lynch van Otterloo YMCA 40 Leggs Hill Road Marblehead MA 01945
4. Salem YMCA 1 Sewall Street Salem, MA 01970

## **VI. Our Coaching Leadership**

Dave Modzelewski - Head Coach

- Based in Beverly
- [modzelewskid@northshoreymca.org](mailto:modzelewskid@northshoreymca.org)
- (781) 990-7007

John Van Meter - Associate Head Coach

- Based in Marblehead
- [vanmeterj@northshoreymca.org](mailto:vanmeterj@northshoreymca.org)
- (781) 990-7047

Jacqueline Russolillo - Head Age Group Coach

- Based in Beverly
- [russolilloj@northshoreymca.org](mailto:russolilloj@northshoreymca.org)
- (978) 564-3904

Leanne Smith - Assistant Senior Coach

- Based in Beverly
- [smithl@northshoreymca.org](mailto:smithl@northshoreymca.org)
- (978) 564-3923

Cindy Lee - Ipswich Lead Site Coach

- Based in Ipswich
- [lees@northshoreymca.org](mailto:lees@northshoreymca.org)
- (978) 356-9622

Gina Grinarmml - Salem Lead Site Coach

- Based in Salem
- [grinarmmlg@northshoreymca.org](mailto:grinarmmlg@northshoreymca.org)
- (781) 990-7064

## **VII. Practice Schedules**

Practice schedules vary by location and by group within each location. We base our changes in schedules with the change in competition seasons. Short Course (SC) is measured in yards for racing and Long Course (LC) is measured in meters for racing. Short course season runs from August through April. Long Course season runs from April until August. When we make the change to the Long Course season we also make one additional adjustment to the schedules which coincides with the end of the school year so that when the swimmers are out of school the schedule changes.

Practice changes due to meet occur on an as needed basis.

1. There may be a change or cancellation of practice if we are hosting a meet at our Beverly pool.
2. There may be a change or cancellation of practice if we have a substantial number of swimmers at an away meet.
3. There may be a change or cancellation immediately following a long competition weekend (depending on the training group).
4. There may be a change or cancellation if there is a problem with a pool at one of our facilities or with the facility itself.
5. Inclement weather may also result in a change or cancellation of practice. We follow a strict policy of canceling practice only when the Y facility closes. However, in the event any one family or swimmer feels uncomfortable with commuting to and from practice due to inclement weather, they should make that family decision and be sure to communicate with their coach. The head coach will make every effort to communicate cancellations and changes due to inclement weather by email, social media, and via our team website.

## **VIII. Team Communication**

- A. Channels of Communication - The coaches of the YNS Sharks work hard to communicate with swimmers and their families. A parent who accesses the various channels of communication mentioned below will find immediate answers to many questions about swimming with the YNS Sharks.
- B. Team Website - [www.ynssharks.net](http://www.ynssharks.net) - The channel that is most useful to stay informed and updated for your family is the team's website ([www.ynssharks.net](http://www.ynssharks.net)), you can look here to find practice schedules, upcoming meets, team events, and job sign ups. In addition, the website has our team records, coaches contact info, swimmer info, parent info, college info, and links to state and national swimming organizations, etc.
- C. Team Emails - Used to announce and report on meets, team social events and fundraisers, to request volunteers, and to make any urgent or especially exciting team announcements. Please make sure that the team has an e-mail address that you

check regularly, as this is a primary means of team communication.

- D. **Group Meetings** - Once or twice a year the coaching staff conducts group meetings designed to educate parents regarding their swimmer's group. This is a good chance to hear about the coach's goals and strategies for your child's training group.
- E. **Coach E-mails** - The Head Coach sends out a monthly update and flash updates to the entire Team. Some assistant coaches send out biweekly or monthly updates to all of their swimmers.
- F. **Coach Conferences 1 on 1** - Contact your swimmers coach, lead site coach or Head Coach to set up a time to meet. Please understand that during practice is not a good time to attempt an involved conversation with your child's coach. The coach is responsible for all the swimmers at practice and must devote his or her attention to them, rather than to their parents.

## **IX. USA Swimming Safe Sport**

- A. USA Swimming is committed to providing a healthy and positive environment free from abuse for all its members. USA Swimming's Safe Sport program, a comprehensive abuse prevention program, consists of a multi-layered approach to keep kids safe, including: required policies and best practice guidelines; mandatory screening, including criminal background checks and employment screening; training and education; monitoring, supervision and mandatory reporting. These measures are informed by experts in the field of child safety and are among the strongest safeguards found in youth-serving organizations.
- B. Built within the framework of USA Swimming Safe Sport are rules concerning communication between coaches, swimmers, and parents. These rules are all incorporated into the standard practices of the YNS coaching staff.
- C. It is in the best interest of all parents and swimmers to visit the safe sport resource website to familiarize themselves with this information. In the event there are any questions, we do have local resources available to assist us with any topic. [USA Swimming Safe Sport Resource Center](#).

## **X. Parent Volunteering**

A. All swim team organizations rely heavily on the volunteer efforts of the families that make up their team. Our team has a Parent Advisory Committee which is in place to lead the way, supporting many aspects of the team operations. The efforts largely fall into two categories: 1. Home Meet Operations and 2. Team Building/Celebratory events. The entire concept of parent volunteers is vital to the success of our team and the culture that we strive to create where we all support the swimmers in as many facets of their journey as possible. For that reason as it relates to our hosted home meets, we have a policy which must be adhered to for parents.

B. Home Meet Volunteer requirement as listed in our electronic registration package:

I/We understand that for every home hosted YNS swim meet that our swimmer enters, we as parents/caretakers are required to volunteer for a role in the operation of the meet.

In the event that there are extenuating circumstances that prevent the parents/caretakers from fulfilling this responsibility, they will work with the Parent Coordinator so that there will be an understanding and or accommodation arranged.

As each home hosted meet approaches its entry cut off date, we will examine the volunteer reports for the meet. We may reach out to you in the interest of facilitating your accepting a volunteer role.

We understand that there may be situations where parents/caretakers may not be available and we are happy to work with each family. However, in the event that there is a repeated avoidance of volunteering at home hosted meets where your swimmer is entered, we reserve the right to remove (scratch) your swimmer from the meet.

C. Volunteering for other events across the entire team or locally:

In any one season there are many opportunities and needs for parent volunteers. Here is a short list:

- Team Kick Off and Fitting
- Site specific celebratory events
- Holiday events
- Team outings
- Pre Championship pasta parties
- Team banquets

## **XI. Team Travel**

When there is a meet which requires traveling to a destination, whether it be regionally or nationally, all families are asked to make their own travel arrangements. Our Y organization handles all of the coaching staff travel arrangements and the coaching staff will not be responsible for coordinating hotel blocks or flights. The simple reason is that members of the YMCA of the North Shore staff are not allowed to enter into any contractual arrangements on their own. In the event that there are parents who are so inclined to take the lead and work with hotels for room blocks, that is welcomed and extremely helpful.

## **XII. Our Team Sponsor and Equipment Vendor**

- A. The YNS Sharks team is sponsored by Arena swimwear. As such, that requires us to wear Arena team suits and each year we work with Arena and our equipment vendor Varsity Swim Shop to choose the gear that is both required and optionally available to our swimmers and parents. We hope that many of our swimmers are able to avail themselves to as many as these items as possible so that we present our team as a force to be reckoned with in and out of the pool, as an outfitted organization.
- B. Varsity Swim Shop is located at: 157 Main Street North Reading and can be reached at (978) 276-0070. As part of our team website, we have a portal that allows our families access to an

exclusive website that only offers our team gear. The staff at Varsity Swim Shop is always available to help with sizing dilemma's, equipment questions, and any other questions. Access to our portal can be gained through our website and at [www.varsityswim.com](http://www.varsityswim.com). The portal is accessible during certain times of the year, families are notified through email when the portal will be open for a period of time.

Team Login: YNS (case sensitive)

Team Password: SHARKS (case sensitive)

### **XIII. Our Training Groups**

- A. The YNS Team Structure is rooted in a development plan that allows each swimmer to be placed based on age and ability. Our experience tells us that this strategy allows swimmers to develop at an appropriate pace but retains the flexibility for coaches to recognize that adjustments can be made easily as it becomes appropriate.
1. Pre Team - focus is placed on the most basic skills
    - a) Little Sharks (ages 5-8)
    - b) Shark Fins (ages 8-11)
  2. Bronze Group ( 10 & under) - focus is placed on entry level competitive concepts and basic skills of all four strokes
  3. Silver (12 & under) - focus is placed on heavier stroke technique, essentials of competition, and learning practice versus race concepts
  4. Gold ( 14 & under) - focus is placed on more advanced stroke technique and progress training strategies
  5. These three groups are all focused on more serious training, stroke refinement, aerobic and strength training. The major distinction between them is the path which the swimmer chooses to follow relative to their goals as well as their academic, athletic, and extracurricular commitments.
    - a) Pre Senior (11 to 14/ Freshman in high school)
    - b) High School (Must be in high school)
    - c) Pre National and National (must be in high school)

## **XIV. Parental Support Tips for all groups**

### **A. Pre Team**

1. Key concepts: Introduce all four strokes, streamlining, practice etiquette, develop body awareness within the water, fun and fostering interest in the sport of swimming.
2. **Parent Tips:**
  - a) RELAX!! Your child's swimming career is a marathon, not a sprint.
  - b) Fun, fun, and more fun! Be clear with your child that swimming is not work, it is play.
  - c) Emphasize process over performance. What time your child goes in the 25 free is about the least important thing right now.
  - d) Encourage participation in other sports and activities.

### **B. Bronze**

1. Key concepts: Swim all four strokes legally, foster ability to kick, practice etiquette, build upon body awareness within the water, core body development, fun and foster interest in the sport of swimming.
2. **Parent Tips:**
  - a) Encourage participation in other sports and activities.
  - b) Do things that help them form an identity as a "swimmer", make it their thing.
  - c) Teach them to love our Team, their teammates, and the sport.
  - d) Display trust in the system and coaches to boost your child's confidence.
  - e) Be there, but not THERE!
  - f) Avoid coaching.
  - g) Teach them how to handle failures without fear
  - h) Teach them to be intrinsically motivated. No external awards (i.e. money, ipods, etc.)

### **C. Silver**

1. Key concepts: Competing regularly in swim meets, streamlining, foster ability to kick, build the ability to dolphin kick off all walls in a streamline position, introduce dryland workouts and incorporating pace clock management. Fun and foster interest in the sport of swimming.
2. **Parent Tips:**
  - a) Model impeccable team behavior.

- b) Help them decide where swimming fits in their priorities.
- c) Teach them that the definition of "Competition" is to strive with, not against.
- d) Teach them that progress does not happen linearly.
- e) Remove your ego from the equation.
- f) Encourage participation in other sports and activities, but they need to start choosing.

#### **D. Gold**

1. Key concepts: Competing regularly in swim meets, including travel meets, streamlining, foster ability to kick, build on their ability to dolphin kick off all walls in a streamline position, dryland workouts, pace clock management and introduce goal setting. Fun and foster interest in the sport of swimming.

#### **2. Parent Tips:**

- a) Model impeccable team behavior.
- b) Help them decide where swimming fits in their priorities.
- c) Teach them that the definition of "Competition" is to strive with, not against.
- d) Teach them that progress does not happen linearly.
- e) Remove your ego from the equation.
- f) Encourage participation in other sports and activities, but they need to start choosing.

#### **E. Pre Senior**

1. Key concepts: Competing regularly in swim meets and travel meets expected as well as attending 70% of monthly practices. Streamlining, foster ability to kick, build on their ability to dolphin kick off all walls in a streamline position, dryland workouts, pace clock management, pace and stroke count and build on ability to goal set and time management. Fun and fostering interest in the sport of swimming.

#### **2. Parent Tips:**

- a) MAKE IT THEIR THING!
- b) Start focusing on one or two sports/activities.
- c) Allow play to evolve into satisfaction of achievement.
- d) Giving them the freedom to change course will give them the best chance of a successful career.
- e) Encourage team travel.

- f) Teach them how to demonstrate good sportsmanship.

## **F. Senior**

1. Key concepts: Preparation for high school swimming, advanced refinement of technique and efficiency, aerobic development.

### **2. Parent Tips:**

- a) Help them decide where swimming fits in their priorities.
  - b) Teach them good time management.
  - c) Make it their thing.
1. Personal responsibility.

## **G. Senior Elite**

1. Key concepts: Emphasis: Compete at the highest competitive level, potentially planning to swim in college.

### **2. Parent Tips:**

- a) Teach them good time management and being accountable for THEIR own success.
- b) Help them master goal setting.
- c) Help them understand their contribution as role models to younger swimmers.
- d) Be on the lookout for excessive stress.
- e) Know when it's time to take a day off.
- f) Help them to choose the right college.
- g) Don't focus on scholarships unless you absolutely have to. The "right" school is almost never the one that offers the most money.

## **XV. YNS Sharks Team Costs**

- A. All members of the YNS Sharks Swim Team must be members of our YMCA. Membership can be an individual or family membership based upon your family decision. There are multiple types of memberships, we can direct you to a Membership Team Member to help facilitate that process. The Membership staff can also facilitate any assistance with Financial Assistance that might be necessary.
- B. Team Tuition is an annual tuition. There are two basic options for payment. Annual payment or seven monthly installments from September through March. In the event families are seeking

alternative payment options, please speak with your Lead Coach or contact Association Director of Competitive Aquatics Arthur Athanas at [athanasa@northshoreymca.org](mailto:athanasa@northshoreymca.org) or Association admin Team Member Jane Heck at [heckj@northshoreymca.org](mailto:heckj@northshoreymca.org).

C. For the 2022 - 2023 season, the tuition by group is as follows:

<b>Group Name</b>	<b>Annual Tuition</b>	<b>7 Month Draft</b>
Bronze	\$1441.50	\$205.93
Silver	\$1672.50	\$238.93
Gold	\$1977.00	\$282.43
Pre Senior	\$2407.50	\$343.93
Senior	\$2486.25	\$355.18
Senior Elite	\$2544.00	\$363.43

**NEW FOR 2022-2023:** You will be provided a link to register for USA Swimming on your own. Previously, that process was part of our tuition but USA Swimming has mandated that change be effective immediately.

D. Meet costs

Meet costs vary dependent upon the number of meets you choose to compete in. In order to have an idea of what costs you may incur at each meet, you will need to refer to each Meet's respective Meet information packet which will include a list of fees.

E. YNS Coaching Fee

For each meet that a swimmer enters, there will be a \$22 coaching fee added to your bill. This fee helps us recoup some of the costs incurred for staffing all meets with our coaches.

## **XVI. YNS Swimmer Code of Conduct**

- A. Violation of these rules may result in any of the following:
  - 1. Asking the swimmer to leave practice. Parents will be notified if this occurs.
  - 2. Scratching the swimmer from upcoming swim meets or events.
  - 3. Dismissing the swimmer from the team on either a permanent or temporary basis.
  
- B. All team members are expected to be orderly, courteous, and show sportsmanship during practices, meets, and any team related function. This includes all YMCA facilities, other competition venues (locker rooms, lobbies, parking lots, etc.), including hotels. Any inappropriate behavior may constitute cause for dismissing a swimmer from practice or sending a swimmer home from team functions at the family's expense. All violations of conduct will be reviewed by the YNS Head Coach and may lead to suspension or dismissal from practice, meets, and/or the team.
  
- C. The coaching staff cannot be responsible for the supervision of any swimmer who does not report to them on deck. Therefore, parents of younger swimmers are strongly advised to ensure that their swimmers safely reach the pool deck.

## **XVII. Drugs, Alcohol & Tobacco**

- A. A swimmer shall not engage in any behavior involving the illegal use or distribution of alcoholic beverages, drugs or controlled substances or knowingly remain in the presence of those engaged in such behavior(s). This behavior tends to discredit the swimmer and the YMCA of the North Shore Sharks. This rule shall apply at all times.
  
- B. Helping swimmers is our first priority. If a swimmer is concerned about his own involvement in drugs or alcohol or that of another swimmer, the swimmer is encouraged to talk confidentially with a coach. A swimmer who voluntarily discloses to a coach his involvement with drugs and alcohol may not be charged with a violation of the Team Rules as a result of such disclosure. The swimmer will be referred to substance abuse counseling or treatment at his/her own cost.

## **XVIII. Practice and Meet Behavior**

- A. Swimmers will refrain from using drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.
- B. Swimmers are responsible for the care and proper use of equipment. Practice is not finished until all supplies are returned to storage. Everyone helps.
- C. Swimmers will refrain from physical or verbally abusive behavior.
- D. Swimmers will be dedicated and loyal to YNS and their teammates.
- E. Swimmers will be vocally supportive at meets and at practice and encourage teammates to reach their personal goals.
- F. Swimmers will display our team pride by competing in YNS attire at all times.
- G. Team caps are to be worn at practice and when competing. Older swimmers will participate in team activities involving younger swimmers to reinforce our spirit of teamwork.
- H. Swimmers will act respectfully, remaining silent and make an honest effort to listen and look when anyone is speaking.
- I. Swimmers will arrive on deck 15 minutes prior to practice before the scheduled start time and must contact their coach if they are going to be late. If a swimmer is going to be more than 30 minutes late, attendance is at the coaches discretion.
- J. Swimmers will contact their coach, in advance, by email or telephone if they will arrive late to practice. The coach will determine if the reason for being tardy is an acceptable reason or will be counted as the swimmer being tardy. Habitual tardiness will default to the above guidelines.
- K. Swimmers will be committed to their best effort at all times.
- L. Swimmers are to refrain from inappropriate physical contact, bullying or harassing behavior.
- M. Swimmers will wear appropriate size swimwear and attire to practice and meets. When not on deck, swimmers must wear shorts and/or t-shirts over their suit.

- XIX.** The YNS Swim Team follows the USA guidelines for Safe Sport which can be found at

<http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1960>

## **XX. Use of Cell Phones and Other Mobile Recording Devices**

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras increase the risk for different forms of misconduct in locker

rooms and changing areas. The USA Swimming Athlete Protection Policies prohibit the use of such devices in the locker room or other changing area:

*Article 305.3 Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone camera, is not allowed in changing areas, rest rooms or locker rooms.*

## **XXI. Penalties/Consequences for Violations of the Team Rules**

- A. If the YNS Head Coach determines that a swimmer has or may have violated a Team Rule, the Head Coach will determine the penalty/consequence for the violation after consultation with the swimmer's coach and parent or legal guardian. The penalty or consequences for a violation of the Team Rules will be at the discretion of the Sr. Director of Competitive Aquatics. The penalties or consequences may include, but are not limited to one or more of the following:
1. Counseling by the coach or designee
  2. Community Service
  3. Restriction from team trips and/or swim meets
  4. Loss of privileges
  5. Probation
  6. Suspension
  7. Dismissal from the team